

Approval of the following draft minutes is expected at the next Board of Trustees meeting.

CLINTON-ESSEX-FRANKLIN LIBRARY SYSTEM

Minutes for Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

Held September 28, 2020

Call to Order

The Board of Trustees meeting was called to order at 4:32 p.m. on Monday, September 28, 2020, at Clinton-Essex-Franklin Library System, 33 Oak Street, Plattsburgh, New York, by Mary “Lisa” Minnich, President. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, three Board of Trustee members physically attended at CEFLS while other members attended online via Zoom.

Roll Call

Present at CEFLS: Mary “Lisa” Minnich, Christopher “Chris” Drennan and Andrew “Andy” Lomanto

Present via Zoom: Mary Abendroth, Nicole “Nicky” Bryant, Liz DeFonce, Dorothy Latta, Tom Mandeville and Steve Novacich

Excused Absences: Linda Crosby, Margot Gold, Gayla LePage, Scott McDonald, Darcy Purick and Tim Rowland

Staff Present at CEFLS: Steve Kenworthy, Director; Michael Spofford, Finance Manager; and Dawn Recore, Administrative Assistant

Staff Present via Zoom: David Fuller, Library Computer Specialist, and Anja Bouchard, Library Consultant (entered at 4:34 p.m.)

Consent Agenda

Steve Novacich motioned approval of Consent Agenda, seconded by Mary Abendroth. Consent agenda includes:

- Approval of absences
- Approval of today’s agenda
- Approval of the minutes of the August 24 2020 meeting
- Committees for which there are no reports at this time: Advocacy, Executive, Finance, Health Plan, Negotiating, Personnel and Property

Consent agenda was approved unanimously.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Communications

There were no communications.

President's Remarks

In reference to a proposed calendar of meeting dates for 2021, Lisa Minnich stated that in keeping with Board meetings on the fourth Monday of the month, it appears there are no scheduling conflicts. She asked that everyone check for personal conflicts, such as religious holidays, and let Lisa know. The schedule will be decided upon at the October meeting.

Board members were asked to consider giving to Leadership Campaign, in any amount. Checks should be written to CEFLS with a notation for Leadership. Thank you to those who have already given.

Board meetings will continue to be held with a Zoom option as far into the future as possible. Lisa appreciates this option, even beyond the pandemic, to allow members to attend without having to drive to Plattsburgh during the months of bad road conditions and less daylight. Steve Kenworthy stated that permission to use Zoom for meetings has so far been extended on a month-by-month basis by NYS's governor and it is not known how far into the future this will be allowed.

Plattsburgh Public Library Report

There was no report from PPL.

Director's Report

Steve Kenworthy reported that a letter has been sent to Franklin County to ask them to reconsider their decision to withhold their third and fourth quarter payments to CEFLS, per our contract.

Steve stated that CEFLS has some valuable pieces of art, a Nina Winkel statue and some artist drawings by Rockwell Kent. Since our building is not open to the public, few people have the opportunity to appreciate them. Several suggestions were touched upon.

- Do we sell them to help with the budget crisis?
- Could they be leased out for a period of time for a sum of money then returned?
- Could they be rotated into member libraries for display?
- Would the art gallery at Plattsburgh State be a good place for them?
- What about selling them through an auction house in NY City?

A lively discussion ensued, involving how and when these pieces were obtained and their value. Steve Novacich stated that selling these pieces would be a temporary fix for the difficult financial times that CEFLS is facing. He advocated for initiating savings measures now rather than waiting until more trying times hit in 2021. Michael Spofford then stated that CEFLS has some shares of Met Life stock, worth between \$8,000 and \$10,000. Steve Kenworthy wrapped up this discussion saying that he will look further into these ideas.

Steve Kenworthy provided an update on the server situation. For quite a few years now, North Country Library System (NCLS) has hosted the CEFLS server; however, they are planning to merge with Mid York Library System and at that time they will no longer host our server. At a price of \$46,000, CEFLS could merge with these two systems. A second option would be to have SirsiDynix host us and Steve has requested a quote from them. A third option would be to bring the server back in-house, which would require an increase in infrastructure. A significant plus of doing the merger with NCLS and Mid York would be access to more materials. The merger would involve training for

our staff, followed by training for member library directors and staffs. After Steve has more details, he will prepare a summary sheet of options with a recommendation.

Finance Report

Andy Lomanto motioned approval of the finance reports that were prepared by Michael Spofford and shared with the Board prior to this meeting, seconded by Dorothy Latta.

Michael reported that he prepared a budget-to-date for a meeting of an ad hoc committee whose purpose was to discuss potential budget cuts and reductions. The committee included a mixed group of some Board members and some staff members. As a result, Michael will be preparing a forecast that will show various savings that were discussed that involved carrying forth unspent funds from several line items.

The auditors have requested a pre-audit report, so that is a high priority for Michael right now.

Michael has simplified this month's budget-to-date report by grouping items. His goal was to make the budget-to-date report easier to understand. Several trustees voiced approval of the new format.

Basic aid in the amount of \$500,000+ has been received. Usually that amount would be over \$700,000. Michael stated that the forecast for 2021 that he will do will reflect funding at 80 percent.

The Finance Reports were approved unanimously.

Committee Reports

Nominating Committee: In Gayla LePage's absence at this meeting, Lisa Minnich announced that we have a slate of officers for 2021.

President – Mary "Lisa" Minnich
Vice President – Nicole "Nicky" Bryant
Treasurer – Doreece "Darcy" Purick
Secretary – Gayla LePage
Member-at-Large – Liz DeFonce

Lisa Minnich asked if there were any nominations from the floor; there were none. Andrew Lomanto motioned approval of the slate as presented, seconded by Liz DeFonce. Motion carried unanimously.

Beginning January 1, 2021, the Board will have a vacancy for a Franklin County representative. Lisa asked everyone to advocate for potential candidates.

Unfinished Business

Potential Budget Cuts/Reductions: In Scott McDonald's absence, Lisa Minnich reported that Michael Spofford is pretty sure that we do not need to do anything more for 2020 than the savings measures taken already, and for 2021 we should be okay also, barring changes. At this time, no one has a clue what the Federal or State governments will do. Furloughs will not take place unless absolutely necessary. Savings are being realized by not filling various staff positions that have been vacated in 2020 and the carry-over of various unspent funds.

Steve Novacich asked how we are going to save 20 percent in 2021, since a portion of the savings in 2020 is amounts carried over from previously unspent funds. Michael Spofford responded that there is about \$180,000 in reserves earmarked for vehicles and plant upgrades that could take a hit if necessary.

Dorothy Latta asked if, going into next year, plans are to provide the same services as what are now being provided. Steve Kenworthy stated that it is anticipated that CEFLS will be able to provide the same services.

New Business

Construction Grants - Review and Ranking Criteria: Nicky Bryant motioned approval of Construction Grants Ranking Criteria, seconded by Liz DeFonce. Discussion ensued, during which it was realized that the CEFLS Board is not actually being asked to approve of the construction grants for the two libraries. The motion was then amended to say that the CEFLS Board agrees that Keene Valley Library Association and Plattsburgh Public Library meet the criteria for the Construction Grant. Nicky Bryant and Liz DeFonce were in agreement with the amended motion. Steve Novacich asked why the Board has to vote on this, to which David Fuller responded that DLD requires the approval of the System before they will consider the grant request.

Executive Session

Andy Lomanto motioned approval of Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel performing duties outside their area of expertise or job description, seconded by Steve Novacich. Executive session was entered at 5:25 p.m.

Return to Regular Session

The Board returned to Regular Session at 5:37 p.m., with no action to be taken.

Adjournment

Next month's meeting will be a Zoom meeting. There being no further business to come before the Board, Lisa Minnich adjourned the meeting at 5:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Gayla LePage
Secretary